

## DEPARTMENT OF BENEFIT PAYMENTS

4 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

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August 18, 1976

ALL-COUNTY LETTER NO. 76-110

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

The Department of Benefit Payments is cognizant of the problem of foreign language services delivery for many welfare recipients who have difficulty communicating in the English language. Specifically, the need for competent interpreters in fair hearings is being addressed by the Office of Chief Referee. A project currently underway will enable the Department to certify the language competency of individuals who provide interpreter services in administrative proceedings.

Materials have been developed for persons wishing to become certified interpreters whereby they can familiarize themselves with welfare terminology and by which they can obtain specific information about fair hearings procedures and various welfare programs. A "Fair Hearings Handbook for Interpreters with a Glossary of Select Welfare Terms" has been prepared and should be available by the first of September. A written examination of the material and a foreign language oral examination are prerequisites for certification and will be administered soon after the Handbook becomes available.

While counties and claimants are expected to maximize the use of bilingual personnel in the presentation of their cases, such persons should not serve as interpreters for the State. The Department of Benefit Payments will attempt to provide and pay for interpreters who are independent of obligations or responsibilities to either counties or claimants. The ultimate goal is to render an unbiased interpretation of the dialogue in a case so that language obstacles are reduced or eliminated, and a fair decision can be reached on the merits of the issues in hearings conducted by DBP referees.

Any questions concerning coordination or implementation of this goal may be directed to the Office of Chief Referee.

Sincerely,

DANIEL S. BRUNNER  
Deputy Director

cc: CWDA

**OBsolete**

Superseded by

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Issued

3-17-77